(b) whether the Ministry has looked into it and is planning to issue visas to Pakistani nationals for the whole of National Capital Region; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c) Visas are issued to Pakistan nationals in terms of the India-Pakistan Visa Agreement of 1982 which provides for city/place specific visas for nationals of either country.

Shortage of houses

2720. MS. MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has set up a "High-level Task Force" on affordable housing;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the current shortage of houses in the country-both LIG and MIG;

(d) whether Government proposes to involve private sector to address this problem; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) and (b) A Task Force has been set up by this Ministry on 15th January, 2008 to look into various aspects of providing "Affordable Housing for All" and recommend ways and means of enhancing accessibility of Economically Weaker Section (EWS) and the Low Income Group (LIG) to housing with suitable governmental support and recommend ways and means of enhancing accessibility of the Middle Income Group (MIG) to housing, apart from developing innovative financial instruments for bringing flexibility in the market and making recommendations with regard to fiscal and spatial incentives for increasing supply of house.

The Task Force has been asked to submit its report to the Government within a period of four months from the date for constitution *i.e.* 15th January, 2008.

(c) According to the estimates made the Technical Group constituted by the Ministry for assessment of the urban housing shortage at the end of the Tenth Five Year Plan, the total housing shortage for the Economically Weaker Sections/Low Income Group (LIG) is 24.7 million dwelling units. A combined housing shortage of 0.04 million dwelling units has been estimated for the Middle Income Group (MIG) and High Income Group (HIG).

(d) and (e) The National Urban Housing and Habitat Policy (NUHHP), 2007 encourages public-private partnerships relating to construction of houses and setting up of Greenfield towns. However, the subjects 'land' and 'colonization' come under the purview of State Governments and it is for the State Governments to take appropriate measures for involving private sectors.

Modern facilities in emigration offices

2721. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state: